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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Chicago, IL) Around 9:30 am CT this morning, an envelope containing a powdery substance was received by the Chicago office of Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL). Authorities were immediately called to the scene.

The Chicago Fire Department has confirmed the substance to be benign, and it is suspected to be a combination of pencil and sawdust shavings. The letter accompanying the substance contained hateful language and terms derogatory to Latinos. Staff has safely returned to the office and the incident has been turned over to federal authorities for investigation.

Congressman Gutierrez today issued the following statement:

"This morning's incident was a sad and ugly reminder of the hatred that some people feel toward others who fight for the rights of Latinos, immigrants and the most hardworking and vulnerable among us. Unfortunately, my office and I receive hateful and derogatory letters and phone calls on a regular basis. Virtually all of them cite my work on behalf of immigrants and Latinos as the basis for their angry, insulting and frequently racist and threatening views."

"For me, hate-filled rants like the one we received today remind me that we can never pause or relent in our efforts to bring fairness and justice to Latinos and all immigrants. I want all individuals who send threatening and hateful mail to understand that it only strengthens my resolve to fight on behalf of America's immigrant community. Immigrants work hard, serve in our armed forces, love America and contribute to our country in countless ways. Today's immigrants are tomorrow's citizens and leaders, and I am proud to work on their behalf."

"I thank my staff, who work so diligently for the people of the Fourth District even in the face of anger. I am grateful to the Chicago Fire and Police departments who responded so quickly and professionally to my office today."

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